

Describe your book in 140 characters or less?

As Hank's Promposal literally goes up in flames, he attracts the attn. of another girl, a budding pyro who thinks he's a kindred spirit.

How did you come up with the idea for *My Kind of Crazy*?

I was actually working on an entirely different project at the time, and had to push it aside because these characters showed up in my head and this crazy opening scene and I had to write it down. I wrote the whole first chapter in one sitting, and it remains largely intact as it did in its initial creation. Although I loved the feel of the beginning, I still needed to figure out the rest of their story. I'd been dealing with a lot in my personal life, and had learned that love and family and friendship can truly help carry you when you are unable to carry yourself. Also, things that happen to us are only a piece of our story, not our whole story, which is often so difficult to comprehend when one is a teen. I knew I wanted to find a way to share that reminder and instill hope. The idea found its voice in Hank and Peyton, and the story of their friendship and struggle to move past their life's circumstances and help each other find light in the darkness. I wanted it to be funny though, even though it was dealing with some serious topics, so I knew their worlds had to collide in a way that made them both vulnerable from the start. That's when I came up with the idea of this can't-catch-a-break kid nearly setting a girl's lawn on fire in a failed Promposal. I took it a step further by considering what might happen if it turns out he had a witness, and she happens to be a budding pyromaniac.

Tell us about the main character.

Hank has the hugest heart in the universe, filled to the brim with good intentions. However, his execution could use some work, and often lands him in hot water, particularly with his father. Despite the amount of times things have not gone his way, he remains hopeful. He truly believes that despite all the negativity in the world, there is lots of good too. It's what keeps him going. He has a snarky sense of humor. He's adorable and oblivious. And he's scared of everything. He's an amazing artist, wildly creative, but needs someone to believe in him and remind him that he should believe in himself. Then he meets Peyton, and his world turns inside out.

What is your idea of a perfect Promposal? Did you go to your high school prom? And if so were there any memorable promposals?

I *did* go to my high school prom, but promposals were not really a thing back then. It was more people going in groups with friends, very low key. I went to a very small private school, so ours was just a dinner and dancing at a fancy hotel. I went with a group of friends and my then-boyfriend, who was the only person on the planet who enjoyed dancing less than I did, spent most of the night hiding out in the bathroom to avoid having to. I am a sucker for 80s teen movies, so my perfect Promposal would involve a cute guy standing on my lawn holding up a boom box blasting "In Your Eyes". Or sitting on a dining room table together with a cake between us on which was spelled our PROM while blasting The Thompson Twins song "If You

Were Here.” I’m a total romantic, so any gesture that was thoughtful and showed that he’d put the time and effort into knowing what I love and incorporating that in a creative, personal way would definitely make me want to say yes!

What books formed your thinking or reflected who you were as a child and teen reader?

I grew up on film sets, travelling with both my parents on location for the films my father produced. I’d be pulled out of school sometimes three to five months out of a school year. It was often lonely and made it difficult to sustain friendships back at school because I’d miss so much day-to-day. Books became an invaluable part of my childhood, as they were often an escape and a companion. I devoured anything and everything by Judy Blume and Norma Klein. Judy’s stories and characters were honest and relatable, and Norma’s were edgier and pushed the boundaries even further. I was drawn to stories about girls who were dealing with issues that made them feel separate or like an outsider, and had to find a way to navigate their world. I also loved books that allowed me to slip into the skin of characters with lives completely unlike my own: “Harriet The Spy” by Louise Fitzhugh, “Half Magic” by Edward Eager and “The Borrowers” by Mary Norton. As a teen, I discovered Lewis Carroll’s “Alice In Wonderland”, Douglas Adams’ “Hitchhiker’s Guide To The Galaxy,” Anne Rice’s “The Mummy,” John Irving’s “The World According To Garp,” and all the Kurt Vonnegut I could get my hands on. The characters and the worlds they lived in were so powerful and three-dimensional, allowing the reader use all their senses. Though it had always been my life’s dream, these novels, and so many more, truly helped cement my aspiration to become a writer.